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HERE TO STAY

Due to the overwhelming response it appears that a lot of people are reading the Designee Update. Thank you, we plan to keep publishing the Designee Update on the AFS-600 website.

NEW THIS YEAR

The airplane Practical Test Standards are being revised as this newsletter is being written. The Private Pilot, Commercial Pilot, and Flight Instructor Airplane Practical Test Standards should be published some time this year. If all goes as planned you should see these Practical Test Standards some time this summer. Watch the AFS-600 website for a release date.

HOLDING PATTERNS AGAIN?

There is still a continuing debate within the flight instructor community regarding holding pattern entry procedures. *(This article is from an APRIL 1994 issue of the Designee Update)* A question frequently asked is, "As a flight instructor, am I required to teach the three recommended holding pattern entry procedures defined in the Instrument Flying Handbook and the AIM?" The answer is YES. In the introduction to the Practical Test Standards (PTS), it is the CFI's responsibility to train the student in all tasks listed in the PTS.

Another question frequently asked, "Must the pilot examiner test the applicant using the recommended holding pattern entry, or can the applicant use any desired method?" In the past, the applicant would have been required to use one of the three recommended procedures; however, a change has occurred

The January 6, 1994, issue of the AIM, page 5-3-7, paragraph (d), now states: "While other entry procedures may enable the aircraft to enter the holding pattern and remain within protected airspace, the parallel, teardrop, and direct entries are the procedures for entry and holding recommended by the FAA."

If an applicant elects to use holding pattern entry procedures other than those recommended by the FAA and, in doing so, remains within the holding pattern airspace to be protected, the procedure would be acceptable if accomplished safely.

UNDERSTANDING THE SELECTION PROCESS

Over the past few years FAA inspectors have unintentionally misinformed pilot examiner candidates regarding the National Examiner Board selection process. Passing on incorrect or partially correct information has led to huge disappointments, especially after unnecessarily spending money for travel. In one case the examiner applicant traveled from London, England to attend initial examiner training, only to discover that he would not be appointed because the position had not been previously approved by a manager.

Inspectors involved in the selection process should guard against creating false hope for the candidate. If any part of the process is vague or in doubt, don't hesitate to check with the NEB.

There are several steps in the qualification process. Let's walk through the process, beginning with the candidate's application. The candidate should be thorough in filling out the application in an effort to obtain the maximum amount of credit for education, flight times, special types of aircraft, etc. The amount of credit or points awarded to the candidate shall not be disclosed.

Send the completed application to the NEB as soon as possible [FAA Form 8710-10(1-00)]. The address is provided on the application. The NEB normally meets in the first month of each quarter to process applications, so poor timing or dragging your feet could add as much as three months to the waiting period.

After the Board receives and processes the application, the applicant will be informed of the results by letter. If the applicant has qualified, the letter will state that in order to be placed in the selection pool, he or she must go to an Airman Knowledge Testing Center and pass a written knowledge test with a score of 80% or better. He or she will not be in position to be selected from the pool until this knowledge test has been completed. By the way, this test will be appropriate to the candidate's certificates and ratings held and is composed of questions from the appropriate instructor knowledge test. Fundamentals of Instruction knowledge areas are NOT included in this test.

After the Board receives the test results, those candidates with a grade of at least 80%, will be placed in the selection pool corresponding to the FSDO or FSDO's of choice as indicated by their application. Candidates are placed on the pool listing in numerical sequence based on the points received during the Board review process. The score on the Knowledge Test does not effect the position in the pool. Applicants will be informed only that

they have been placed into the FSDO selection pool and thereby are potentially eligible to be selected by the FSDO(s) as an examiner. Per the NEB Charter, the numerical score/position on the pool listing will not be disclosed.

Why did the Board elect NOT to disclose specific information regarding points or position on the selection list? The Board knew this decision would not be received with great enthusiasm; however, this decision eliminates complaints from candidates arguing that they should have received more points and should be much higher on the list than Mr. Jones. These complaints cannot materialize if the candidates are simply informed that they are qualified and are on the pool listing. Everyone is treated in the exact same objective manner.

The selection process was published when the National Examiner Board was formed and several times since; however, some inspectors have given incomplete or “the way it used to be type information” to an examiner applicant. Later down the road after the candidate invests considerable time completing the application, travel, money, study time etc., they are shocked and have hot flashes when they learn the process is not at all the way it was explained.

After a candidate is informed he or she is in the FSDO pool, it is not uncommon to later stroll by the FSDO and proudly announce status. If interested, the FSDO may call the Board and obtain a candidate listing for their district. The Board will forward for review only the TOP 3 candidates. The FSDO may select number 1, 2, or all three for that matter.

Some inspectors do not understand why they are sent only the top 3 candidates to choose from. The answer is simple. They are the top 3 candidates based on background, experience, education, flying time, and currency, etc. The Administrator and AFS-1 instructed the NEB that this process would be fairest for all candidates.

For years, acquaintance went a long way in the selection process but it is no longer the main factor. For example, on the backside of the NEW Airman Certificate and/or Rating Application, 8710-1, the word “acquaintance” is no longer a method for renewing a flight instructor certificate. They must now show activity (currency).

Once again, the top 3 applicants sent to the FSDO for selection scored the highest and were determined current. Please note that attendance of the (5 day) Initial Designated Pilot Examiner Seminar conducted at Oklahoma City does not add points or in any other way enhance the likelihood of becoming one of the top 3 applicants. However, advance attendance may provide the advantage to an applicant who is among the 3 names available to the FSDO in their selection decision for tie-breaking purposes, etc.

The NEB does have some discretion regarding unusual circumstances. For example, the FSDO may need an examiner who has experience in some unique aircraft. Lets assume that only one candidate with that experience exists, but unfortunately the candidate is not in the top three. In special cases, in order to meet public demand and certification needs, the Board will consider a waiver at the request of the Regional Flight Standards Division Manager and make the candidate available.

Up to this point, we have talked a great deal about the top three candidates, but this presents a problem when selecting balloon and glider candidates, since it is not likely that more than 3 balloon or glider candidates would always be present to pick from. In this case, the NEB will send the FSDO balloon or glider candidates in the order of their qualification scores if there are only two or three.

The knowledge test score of 80%, along with basic qualifications of the application, will put you in the pool. The only time a score higher than 80% will come into play is for tie-breaking purposes.

Once a candidate has been selected from the top three on the list, the FSDO could tell the candidate that he or she will be designated pending satisfactory completion of the Initial Designated Pilot Examiner Seminar in Oklahoma City and a flight check. The attendance and satisfactory completion of the Initial Pilot Examiner Seminar at Oklahoma City is accomplished by many candidates before they have been selected by the FSDO. However because of the costs involved in attending the seminar some elect to attend after being selected. It is important to remember that prior attendance at the Initial DPE Seminar does not guarantee eligibility or selection. The examiner applicant should check with the designating FSDO before attending the Initial DPE seminar in order to avoid being disappointed. This is the area in which the FSDO should use caution when advising interested pilots to avoid the appearance of making commitments that can not be kept if the pilots name is not in the top 3 in the pool.

WHEN ARE SPINS REQUIRED?

When are flight instructor applicants required to demonstrate spins? This is an age old question which is still being asked. The Practical Test Standards have addressed this, but apparently some confusion still lingers.

The current Flight Instructor Practical Test Standards FAA-S-8081-22 and FAA-S-8081-6A, state in a note under Area of Operation XII, Task C and Area of Operation IX, Task F respectively, “At the discretion of the examiner, a logbook record attesting applicant competency in spin entries, spin, and spin recoveries may be ACCEPTED in lieu of this TASK. Logbook record shall be certified by the flight instructor who conducted the spin instruction”. Since the word “may” is permissive, the examiner has the discretion in accepting these records.

If the instructor applicant is disapproved due to lack of knowledge during the oral portion of the practical test, or shows a lack of skill in stall awareness, spin entry, spins or spin recovery, then during the retest, the applicant will be required to demonstrate a spin. If a disapproval occurs due to lack of knowledge or skill in a task not associated with stall awareness, spin entry, spins or spin recovery, the examiner can elect not to test spins when conducting the retake.